

Ref:

5 December, 2008

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09 DEC 2008

Mr John Young
Principal Council Officer
General Purpose Standing Committees
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney 2000

Dear Mr Young,

Re: Inquiry transcript – the transport needs of Sydney's North west Sector

Thank-you for forwarding the proof of the transcript for the above inquiry and I apologise for the delay in my response.

Please find attached my corrections, which are very minor. In response to the two questions on notice I would like to provide the following answers:

1. Funds "wasted" by councils on planning activities relating to NW rail projects which have been cancelled or indefinitely deferred:

Unfortunately this has proved difficult to quantify. Much of the affected councils' expenditure relating to these projects has been bound up in residential or commercial developments that may still proceed but which will now have to be extensively reworked and scaled back. In addition councils are still working through the ramifications of the Government's announcement and have not yet reached a conclusion about their impact on other projects (some which may also be affected by the global economic crisis).

The following list of affected projects in which some or all of the councils in the North West Sub-Region are involved does however provide a sense of the magnitude of the resources committed by affected councils to date:

- Fifteen years of planning and development of the Rouse Hill Centre to serve the needs of a population the size of Canberra, based on the Metropolitan Strategy and also on the assumption that the NW Rail Link/Metro would proceed.
- The development of Council housing strategies that are based on increasing densities at both planned and existing public transport nodes.
- Development of the Norwest Business Park – with companies such as Woolworth's locating there because of the promised rail infrastructure but currently having to pay for private transport for their workers.
- Preparation of Council LEPs, DCPs and CPs as required under the State Government's Planning Reform Agenda which have been based on the government's infrastructure commitments.
- Costs to Councils of the preparation of town centre plans, transport interchange and car parks as well as for major development projects relating to proposed rail upgrades and new stations. These plans may have to be scaled back, deferred or even cancelled (eg, Penrith Council's plans for development of the WELL precinct and the Hills Shire Council plans for the Carlingford Court redevelopment). Other examples include recent precinct

plans for Riverstone and Alex Avenue which are based on the assumption that an upgraded railway line and new station will be provided.

- Council involvement in the preparation of the Metro Strategy and Sub-regional Plans – again on the assumption that the infrastructure which forms a key plank to these strategic plans would be provided.
- Numerous submissions prepared by the Councils and WSROC (and the other ROCS) on the North West Rail Link EIS, preferred project reports and Structure Plans for the North-West Centre.
- Preparation of the North West and West Central Sub-regional Employment Study by WSROC and the councils in these sub-regions which has been based on the assumption that this infrastructure would have a critical role in supporting employment growth.

2. *Projections for employment growth in the Parramatta region:*

The Metropolitan Strategy forecast that employment in Parramatta would increase from around 41,500 to 60,000 in 2031. The Regional City Task Force which involves the Department of Planning and Parramatta Council and which was formed in response to the Metropolitan Strategy has subsequently increased this forecast to 70,000.

I am currently on leave at prior to my departure from WSROC at the end of the year. If you have any further inquiries please contact my successor at WSROC, Mr Noel Child.

Yours sincerely



Alex Gooding
Executive Director